



MANSFIELD ADVOCATES FOR CHILDREN
Wednesday, February 3, 2016
Council Chambers, Town Hall
DRAFT - MINUTES

Members Present: Lisa Dahn, Susan Daley, Sarah Delia (staff), Maggie Ferron (staff), Jane Goldman, Jennifer Scanlon, Pat Schneider (staff), Mary Sposito, Judy Stoughton, Ben Wiles, Lisa Young and Kelly Zimmerman.

Regrets: Jordana Frost, Rachel Leclerc, Pat Michalak, Ana Zeller.

Guests: Allison Altieri, Senator Mae Flexer, Rep. Gregg Haddad, Heather Lasky, Kathryn Hassler, Marianne LeGassey, Superintendent Kelly Lyman, Althea Neel, Ashley Semrow, Kate Vallo.

WHAT	DISCUSSION	OUTCOME
CALL TO ORDER	Maggie Ferron called the meeting to order at 5:40pm.	
CONSENT AGENDA	Approval of the Minutes of January 6, 2016.	<i>The January 6, 2016 meeting minutes were approved.</i>
GUEST SPEAKER	<p>Maggie Ferron introduced the representatives from the OEC – Mary Farnsworth and Nordia Savage.</p> <p>OEC Strategic Plan Forum: Mary Farnsworth</p> <p>Mary reviewed the Strategic Plan, here are the highlights. There are Five Goals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Place Children and Families at the Center 2. Increase Access to High Quality Programs 3. Develop a Skilled Early Childhood Workforce 4. Strengthen Partnerships 5. Increase Organization Effectiveness <p>After the presentation, the discussion was opened up to questions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What would be the revenue stream for the OEC budget? Would these be the same funds as local programs currently utilize?</i> • <i>Will the Local Collaboratives be able to receive the funds allocated for the Community Plans in the FY 2017 budget?</i> • <i>Would the OEC take referrals from DCF and work with families who have been identified as having issues?</i> • <i>Will the OEC be doing Advocacy for Early Childhood Programs? How does the OEC plan to partner with the advocacy community?</i> • <i>How do we create financial sustainability? What is the effect on the community of missing families and children in need?</i> • <i>What is the objective of home visiting?</i> 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>There seems to be a tension between monitoring in child care centers and a high quality education. There should be more support and less monitoring.</i> • <i>What are the appropriate expectations for child outcomes? Programmatic requirements? Evidence based practice?</i> • <i>What is the status of the Commission on Women? High quality early childhood care allows women to access the workforce.</i> • <i>What about universal access to preschool? What about full day public pre-school?</i> • <i>Can the Infant/toddler cost sharing funding be increased? Universal access to Infant/toddler programs in next ten years?</i> • <i>Can the presence of the OEC Commissioner be increased at local events?</i> • <i>What about paid family leave? Can employers be provided with tax breaks for providing childcare?</i> • <i>How do we provide access to early care for all, some families currently fall through the cracks?</i> • <i>What is the definition of early care? There is a lack of clarity as to what “early childhood” is.</i> • <i>How do we reach kids in different sectors?</i> • <i>Can we finalize the program standards and simplify them?</i> • <i>The public library is often the first step for families, especially in small towns. How do we integrate their programs?</i> • <i>Shouldn’t we be partnering with pediatricians? They see very young children first.</i> • <i>Is it possible to move funds from Priority districts to Competitive districts in the School Readiness program?</i> • <i>What about support for families that choose to keep their children at home?</i> • <i>How do we integrate the Transition to Kindergarten?</i> • <i>Mansfield places a high regard on parent choice, how can we make that a priority?</i> <p>OEC presenter Mary Farnsworth asked how aggressive the OEC should be in pursuing these policies. The expansion of charter and magnet schools and the socio-economic integration and parent choice is a factor.</p> <p>Senator Mae Flexer spoke about the State budget process. She was discouraged about the proposal to combine all Early Childhood funds together, lessening transparency and control. She gave suggestions to attend the Appropriations Committee Hearings on</p>	
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	February 16.	
STAFF REPORT	<p>Staff Report: Maggie Ferron</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The School Readiness RFP and the QE RFP have arrived and have been or will be issued and publicized. • Centers should support the SR program by making sure there is a waitlist for each Center. • We are starting a new program for parents called Raising a Reader. This is an 8 week parent program to show parents how to read to their children and interact with them. Books will be given out every week. This program is facilitated by Anne Bladen and Janice Boltseridge of UConn Child Labs. • The Town of Mansfield budget is in the beginning stages, the funding for the Coordinator and assistant to Coordinator has been placed in the budget. Town Council advocacy will be needed to support this budget. <p>Chair and Membership Recruitment: Maggie Ferron</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are membership forms to fill out if you wish to become a member of MAC. There is also a form available online at the Town website. <p>Communications Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are new directions for the website from Signature Brand Factory, so Maggie will try to change the pictures again. <p>Conversation Club:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Conversation Club will be starting again this weekend. 	
NEW BUSINESS	<p>Next Meeting Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nutrition and Young Children: Developing a Healthy Relationship with Food 	
ADJOURN	<p>The meeting adjourned at 7:15 pm.</p> <p>Next Regular MAC Meeting, Wednesday, March 2, 2016, 5:30pm – 7:30pm, Town Hall.</p> <p>Respectfully submitted, Sarah Delia, Assistant to the Early Childhood Services Coordinator</p>	

All Mansfield Children ages birth through 8 years old are healthy, successful learners, and their families are connected to the community.